



**Higher National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications
Qualification Verification Summary Report 2018
Learning and Development**

Introduction

Higher National Qualifications

Assessor/verifier units:

- ◆ H290 35: Conduct the Assessment process
- ◆ H291 35: Conduct the Internal Verification Process

Learning and Development units:

- ◆ HE0T 33: Planning and Delivering Training Sessions to Groups

Scottish Vocational Qualifications

- ◆ GA2C 24: SVQ Level 4 Learning and Development
- ◆ GA29 23: SVQ Level 3 Learning and Development

Single-unit stand-alone Professional Development Awards:

- ◆ FD40 04: Assess Workplace Competence Using Direct Methods
- ◆ FD41 04: Assess Workplace Competence Using Direct and Indirect Methods
- ◆ FD43 04: Internally Monitor and Maintain the Quality of Workplace Assessment

General comments

As the assessor/verifier qualifications are regulated, a condition applies requiring all assessors and verifiers of regulated qualifications (SVQs) to achieve a recognised assessor/verifier qualification within 18 months of starting to practice (if no alternative timescale is stated in the subject-specific assessment strategy for the SVQs being assessed/verified). There is also a requirement for previously qualified assessors and verifiers of SVQs to demonstrate through continuing professional development (CPD) that they are working in line with the current NOS in assessment and verification.

External verification visits

Of 119 external verification visits, 110 were for SVQs, eight were HN units, and one was a Customised Unit.

Category 2: Resources

Criterion 2.1: Assessors and internal verifiers must be competent to assess and internally verify, in line with the requirements of the qualification.

All assessors and internal verifiers were competent to assess and internally verify in line with the assessment strategy, with many assessors and internal verifiers having significant experience in delivery of the awards.

Staff in all centres undertook appropriate CPD to maintain current professional and occupational competence. Some centre staff had attended the SQA PDW workshops to maintain their CPD and some had used the SQA Toolkit to demonstrate that their practice was in line with current standards. In line with assessment strategy requirements, most centres clearly planned and recorded CPD in accordance with the Learning and Development 10 unit (Reflect On, Develop and Maintain Own Skills and Practice in Learning and Development). However, some centres require to more formally and clearly record the 'planning' of CPD activity in order to evidence both the 'planning and recording' of activity in line with the unit. The CPD Template on SQA's secure site can assist centres to effectively plan and record CPD.

Criterion 2.4: There must be evidence of initial and ongoing reviews of assessment environments; equipment; and reference, learning and assessment materials.

Almost all centres have a process to review centre policy, procedures and learning materials provided to learners (and record version control) and this was reinforced by many centres having undergone a recent systems verification audit.

Almost all centres provide the SQA Practical Guides and 'Guide to Assessment' to candidates, and many centres have chosen to provide the templates available on the secure site on VARCS and 'Benefits and Drawbacks of Assessment Methods'. Where these templates had not been used, centres were signposted to this resource.

Site selection checklists were being used to monitor risk/review assessment environments, where required.

Category 3: Candidate support

Criterion 3.2: Candidates' development needs and prior achievements (where appropriate) must be matched against the requirements of the award.

All candidates within centres go through a careful selection process to ensure that their work situation is appropriate to the award and that they would have access to sufficient candidates to meet the evidence requirements within the award.

All candidates receive an induction to the award and, at this point, they would have the opportunity to discuss any prior achievements that they may have which, if appropriate, could be matched to the award that they are undertaking. Initial assessment planning/agreement is carried out, which provides an opportunity to identify any specific development or additional needs.

Assessment planning records are reviewed throughout the duration of the award. Some centres have developed an 'Induction Checklist', clearly documenting that various key centre policies have been discussed and received.

Criterion 3.3: Candidates must have scheduled contact with their assessor to review their progress and to revise their assessment plans accordingly.

In almost all centres there was evidence within portfolios of clear and frequent candidate–assessor contact recorded, with clearly documented assessment planning, progress review, updated action plans and clear and constructive feedback provided to candidates. Some centres used more innovative methods of maintaining contact with candidates, eg Outlook to arrange meetings to supplement the more formal methods such as telephone calls and e-mails.

Category 4: Internal assessment and verification

Criterion 4.2: Internal assessment and verification procedures must be implemented to ensure standardisation of assessment.

Most centres have implemented a clear, three-stage internal verification procedure and clearly documented procedures for assessment and internal verification. Within these centres, there was evidence of procedures being implemented through documentation available demonstrating internal verification (monitoring and sampling) planning, internal verification reports, completed assessment records and standardisation activities. Many centres were effectively implementing the CAMERA* principles to the monitoring and sampling processes, reflecting the requirements of the L&D 11 standards. Most centres were effectively carrying out interim and summative sampling and clear and constructive feedback to assessors was evident.

*CAMERA:

- ◆ Candidate cohorts, eg full-time/part-time, size, ability
- ◆ Assessors — experienced, inexperienced, those that require additional support
- ◆ Methods of assessment — all those used by assessors in the occupational area you are quality assuring
- ◆ Elements — all elements/units of the qualification
- ◆ Revised and new qualifications and units (also problematic units)
- ◆ All assessment locations over time

Criterion 4.3: Assessment instruments and methods and their selection and use must be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair.

Evidence sampled for the awards was valid, reliable, practicable, equitable and fair and met all the requirements detailed within the Learning and Development Assessment Strategy. The Evidence Tracker for the award has been adopted in almost all centres and assists in ensuring that all performance, knowledge and evidence requirements are being met. Internal quality assurance processes within the centres ensured that quality assurance principles are met and standardisation activity ensured accuracy and consistency in decisions made.

Assessment methods sampled included personal statement, observation, witness statements/endorsing statements, work products, questioning and professional discussion. Very few centres had introduced video as a means of recording assessor–candidate feedback due to the assessor having limited access to the candidate’s workplace.

Criterion 4.4: Assessment evidence must be the candidate’s own work, generated under SQA’s required conditions.

All centres ensure that the evidence on which the assessment decision is made solely belongs to the candidate under assessment. Almost all centres have a documented malpractice policy to include plagiarism and all centres cover candidate responsibilities at the induction process, with some centres using a candidate induction checklist recording all information received. A

candidate disclaimer is signed where paper portfolios are being used (or electronic signatures where electronic portfolios are being used), declaring that all work submitted is the candidate's own. Assessor observation and witness testimony is used by centres to authenticate candidate evidence.

All centres visited had chosen the appropriate 'workplace' or 'non-workplace' assessor or internal verification qualification in line with SQA's required conditions in [Choosing Appropriate Assessor and Verifier Qualifications](#).

Criterion 4.6: Evidence of candidates' work must be accurately and consistently judged by assessors against SQA's requirements.

All centres demonstrated accuracy and consistency in making judgements, with assessors having the same, clear interpretation of the standards being assessed and the detailed evidence requirements. Almost all centres were using the SQA evidence trackers, which facilitated a consistent approach to recording performance, knowledge and evidence requirements. All centres evidenced internal verification being carried out, with most centres evidencing interim and summative sampling demonstrating consistency in assessors' judgements. All decisions and all centres demonstrated regular standardisation activity, thus ensuring consistent interpretation of the standards. Those centres that had chosen to adopt an electronic portfolio were encouraged to ensure that all evidence requirements were being recorded within the system and not just performance and knowledge.

Criterion 4.7: Candidate evidence must be retained in line with SQA requirements.

All centres complied with SQA's requirement to retain all candidate evidence for the group award/units until at least three weeks after the official completion date. All centres also complied with the requirement to retain all candidate evidence from the point of initial contact for the session by the qualification verifier until after the verification visit has taken place. Centres generally had guidance on retention of candidate evidence clearly within their centre policies and procedures and, in particular, those centres that had recently undergone a systems verification visit.

Criterion 4.9: Feedback from qualification verifiers must be disseminated to staff and used to inform assessment practice.

All centres provided appropriate evidence to demonstrate having disseminated feedback contained within qualification verifier reports to the relevant assessors/verifiers. Standardisation meetings were demonstrated as a means of disseminating information with many centres having the qualification verification feedback as a standing agenda item. Any recommendations and actions taken to enhance provision or meet quality requirements were recorded in minutes of meetings or centre decision logs. Other methods of dissemination of information included storing the report on an online portal which could be accessed by all relevant assessors and internal verifiers. Some centres used CPD events as an opportunity to discuss qualification verification feedback.

Areas of good practice reported by qualification verifiers

The following good practice was reported during session 2017–18:

- ◆ Proactive measures in place to meet GDPR requirements, providing CPD opportunities for centre staff.
- ◆ Detailed CPD planning within some centres with self-evaluation and appraisal being used to inform individual and wider team development activity.
- ◆ CPD Toolkit, RPL and evidence of L&D10 completed by some staff within centres.
- ◆ Online portal being used effectively to provide learning resources.
- ◆ Mentoring of new assessors within some centres with experienced assessors enabling effective standardisation of practice.
- ◆ Centre staff training provided on autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, equality and diversity.

Specific areas for development

The following area for development was reported during session 2017–18:

- ◆ Clear evidence of planning and recording of CPD activity in line with the requirements of L&D 10.
- ◆ Where electronic portfolios are being used, ensure all evidence requirements are built in to the recording process.